

Since its inception, the organization has provided support to over 17,000 survivors of human trafficking, homeless kids, and foster children. To this date, a remarkable 320 “forever families” have been created via adoption. Place of Hope has also helped to generate much-needed awareness for this issue. Over 40,000 community members have been educated about human trafficking under Place of Hope.

Over the years, the organization has expanded its outreach and become a more diverse enterprise. Beginning in 2008, a need for a more robust community foster care program was found. As a result, Homes of Hope was created to help recruit families in the local community to adopt foster children. The Peter and Fern Barsanti Family Life Center was opened in 2010 as another measure to provide therapy and other recreational necessities to the children within the organization’s supervision.

Organizations like Place of Hope are invaluable to making the world a better place for the next generation, particularly those that have endured unimaginable hardship. Children who have been through trafficking, abuse, and neglect have a continuum of support available to them through this terrific project that will continue to do marvelous work for our youth. Designating the month of May as the 20th anniversary of Place of Hope is a necessary step for us to take to help ensure awareness is raised and progress is made.

HONORING KARISSA KRUSE AS
THE 2020 WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 26, 2021

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Karissa Kruse, whom I have named the 2020 Woman of the Year in Sonoma County, California. Woman of the Year recognizes women who have made important contributions to California’s 5th Congressional District in Arts and Culture, Professional Achievement, Entrepreneurship and Innovation or Community Service.

Born in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Ms. Kruse grew up surrounded by a loving and supportive family. A University of Pennsylvania alumna, she graduated with a BS in Economics and an MBA in Marketing from the prestigious Wharton School of Business. In pursuit of a warmer climate, she came to Sonoma County shortly after graduating, starting Argot Wines and Karma, an angel investment firm.

Ms. Kruse began her career with the Sonoma County Winegrowers in 2012 as the Director of Marketing before being named President in 2013. The following year, she launched an initiative charting a 5-year path to 100 percent sustainability, an ambitious target that reflects both her decisiveness as a leader and her passion for our environment and farming families. By September of 2019, nearly all of Sonoma County’s vineyards had been certified sustainable, making it the most ecologically friendly wine region in the world. Ms. Kruse continued to build upon the organization’s environmental leadership, establishing an exclusive partnership with the California Land Stewardship Institute to launch a Climate

Adaptation Certification, the first of its kind for agriculture.

Her tenure as President has also coincided with the recent wildfires that have challenged the resilience of the wine community. Ms. Kruse has been instrumental in guiding our agricultural communities through these tumultuous times, re-establishing the Sonoma County Grape Growers Foundation in 2016 to improve the lives of agricultural workers and their families. Over the past two years, the Foundation has provided over \$1 million for wildfire recovery, housing support, and workforce development. These funds have been crucial in supporting the stability of the wine industry, which in turn has been a linchpin in rebuilding our communities. Moreover, Ms. Kruse is thrilled to have recently married Steve Dutton, a 5th generation Sonoma County farmer, on January 1, 2021. She is honored to be a member of the Dutton family along with Steve and her new stepchildren, Jake and Jordan.

Madam Speaker, Ms. Karissa L. Kruse exemplifies the kind of business leadership that fosters vibrant, cohesive, and prosperous communities. It is therefore fitting and proper that we honor her here today as Sonoma County’s 2020 Woman of the Year.

IN HONOR OF THE LIFE OF HAJJI
FADWAT “EM CHAWKI”
HAIDOUS-BAZZI

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 26, 2021

Mrs. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Hajji Fadwat “Em Chawki” Haidous-Bazzi of Dearborn, Michigan who passed away on March 22nd. Her lifetime of service to our community is worthy of commendation.

Hajji was born on March 1, 1938 in Bint Jbeil, Lebanon but made her home in Dearborn, Michigan. In 1957, she married Hajji Kassem Bazzi and in the wake of the Lebanese Civil War in 1975, they left their home country to come to America. Together they raised six children. After leaving her homeland, she worked tirelessly to reunite her children and their families in diaspora.

Known for her tender heart, she dedicated herself to charitable giving, volunteering, and fundraising for people in need in both Lebanon and Michigan, never asking for anything in return. Generous by nature, she was known to shower those she loved in prayer and in song.

A towering figure among those who knew her, Hajji had a commanding presence and an enduring love of family. She and her husband raised a family of forty-seven strong, who adored her infectious spirit and thoughtful humor. She is survived by her husband, her siblings, including Wayne County Commissioner Al Haidous, her grandchildren, including Michigan Solicitor General Fadwa Alawieh Hammoud, children in law, and great-grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Hajji Fadwat “Em Chawki” Haidous-Bazzi. She was a loving mother and grandmother, and a friend to many. A pillar of our community and a constant reminder of the importance of family and

charity, she will be deeply missed. Our thoughts are with Mr. Bazzi and his family at this time.

IN RECOGNITION OF VICKY
BRECHIBIEL

HON. JOHN JOYCE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 26, 2021

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Vicky Brechbiel on receiving the Client Impact Award from the Greater Chambersburg Chamber of Commerce.

Vicky is a Certified Nursing Assistant at Menno Haven. She has spent 20 years as a CNA caring for her patients. She is dedicated to her patients and consistently goes above and beyond to ensure they receive their favorite foods, wake up at their preferred times, and begin their mornings well. The Client Impact Award is awarded to a person that demonstrates extraordinary efforts to positively impact the lives of their patients. Vicky treats every patient with love and respect, as well as an individualized treatment plan.

Vicky exhibits true dedication, compassion, and professionalism to the residents of Menno Haven. On behalf of Pennsylvania’s 13th District, I congratulate Vicky on this achievement and thank her for her service to our community.

MOURNING THE CONTINUED LOSS
OF LIFE IN AMERICA TO GUN VI-
OLENCE

HON. HALEY M. STEVENS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 26, 2021

Ms. STEVENS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in response to the exceptional number of lives that have been stolen from American communities just this month to the continued scourge of gun violence in this country.

On March 16th in Georgia, a gunman went on a deadly rampage at three spas in the Atlanta area, murdering eight people. Six of the precious lives lost were women of Asian descent: mothers, sisters, and partners.

On March 20th in Pennsylvania, a gunman opened fire at a party in Philadelphia, killing one and wounding five others.

And on March 22nd in Colorado, a gunman took ten innocent souls at a grocery store in Boulder—one of which was a police officer who arrived to help.

I fear that many have grown numb to the news of violence, death, and dreams unrealized in this country, and to those I plead: see your neighbor as yourself. Protect your fellow Americans. Do not give up on the possibility of a future free from pain and fear of preventable death.

On behalf of the victims of gun violence and their families, we cannot be deterred in our mission to institute basic protections to shield the American people from continual loss. I will not surrender to hopelessness, and neither should my colleagues in this legislative body.